# EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH BULLETIN: ERB

SEPTEMBER 15, 1948

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Vol. XXVII, No. 6

# EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH BULLETIN

(Entered in the United States Patent Office)

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PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH, OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, FOR THE SCHOOLS OF OHIO. EDITORIAL AND BUSINESS OFFICES, ROOM 201, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, COLUMBUS, OHIO

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THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH BULLETIN is published monthly except during June, July, and August. Entered as Second-Class Matter, February 9, 1922, at the Post Office at Columbus, Ohio, under the Act of August 24, 1912. Accepted for mailing at specified rates of postage provided for in Section 1103; Act of October 3, 1917, authorized February 21, 1922.

Educational Research Bulletin
SEPTEMBER 15, 1948
Vol. XXVII, No. 6

# Predicting Listener Understanding and Interest in Newscasts[1]

*By* JEANNE S. CHALL AND HAROLD E. DIAL

THE newspapers have recently been the target of a new type of criticism. They have been chided for writing "over the heads" of most of their readers. This criticism is based on the objective findings made with readability formulas, particularly the Flesch formula. Some newspapers have taken these findings seriously, and we now see many news stories that do not use leading sentences which begin with *who, what, when, where, why,* or *how.*

Radio, on the other hand, has always prided itself on being understood. In the opening paragraphs of *News on the Air,* Paul White says: "It wasn't until radio really got going that news reached Americans in simple direct English. The response was favorable and immediate. People were no longer baffled."[2] Mr. White's pride in the clarity of radio news is, however, not substantiated by a recent study made by Readable News Reports for Station WCAU, Philadelphia, which found by the Flesch formula that the average news program was written at the tenth-grade reading level.[3] This means that about six American adults out of ten would find the news difficult to understand if they were to read it. But they heard it. Does that mean that it becomes easier to understand or harder? Are we justified in using a readability formula, developed primarily for measuring the difficulty of written materials, to measure the difficulty of spoken materials?

Rudolf Flesch, in his *Marks of Readable Style,* makes

[1] This paper reports a study which is one of a series of research projects in communication carried on under the direction of Edgar Dale of the Bureau of Educational Research. Paul Wagner, a member of the Journalism Department and news director of Station WOSU, was co-sponsor of this experiment, our first in radio listening.

[2] New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1947. p. 1.

[3] *Broadcasting,* XXXII (May 12, 1947), p. 104.

these qualifications in recommending his formula for analyzing radio programs:

> Writers for a radio audience may well supplement this method [use of his readability formula] with certain recent findings about the relationship between reading and listening comprehension. Goldstein . . . has found significant differences in favor of listening for third grade reading, but no reliable . . . differences for seventh grade material. Larsen and Feder . . . have found listening superior for easy passages, reading superior for passages of medium difficulty, and a very pronounced difference in favor of reading for difficult material. In other words, if material is put on the air rather than on the printed page, easy matter becomes easier but difficult matter more difficult. Radio will therefore magnify differentials in difficulty detected by the writer's formula.[4]

The tenth-grade level is considered fairly difficult by Flesch. Therefore, on the basis of the findings on the relationship between reading and listening comprehension, the difficulty of news programs found by Readable News Reports for Station WCAU is probably underestimated. When this radio news was heard, it must have been "over the heads" of more than 60 per cent of the adult population.

News programs, however, are consistently voted the most popular type of program by radio listeners. The most recent survey by the National Opinion Research Center showed that news programs rank first in popularity among a sample of the national audience.[5] The annual surveys of listeners in the state of Iowa since 1943 show that news broadcasts are the "best liked" radio programs among both men and women.[6]

If news programs are to continue to be an important source of information for the population, they must be understood. Any technique that can help make the news more understandable to larger groups of the population will be helpful to radio stations and wire services. Can readability formulas do it?

Readability formulas have been successfully used by newspapers, magazines, and government agencies. But before they can be used widely for radio programs, answers to the following

[4] New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1943. p. 43 (Teachers College, Columbia University, Contributions to Education, No. 897). References for the indirect quotations are given by Flesch.

[5] *Broadcasting*, XXXIV (March 8, 1948), p. 86.

[6] Whan, Forest L. *The 1947 Iowa Radio Audience Survey*. Des Moines, Iowa: Central Broadcasting Company, 1947. p. 51.

questions would be helpful: Can readability formulas predict the listener's understanding? Can the same difficulty levels that are used for printed materials be used for spoken materials?

Some answers to these two questions are needed since no "listenability" formula has yet been developed. When predictions have been made of the difficulty of material on the air, readability formulas devised for reading have been used. Obviously, some corrections have to be made in using readability predictions for measuring listening in the light of the differentials in the difficulty of written and spoken material.

Two other questions must be faced in predicting the understanding of broadcasts: Is there a relationship between comprehension and interest? Can readability formulas predict interest? We believed that these questions were important because of the emphasis that editors put on interest. This is well illustrated in an Associated Press memorandum to radio writers quoted by Paul White:

> News editors today are digging for human interest items. They often are leading off their broadcasts with light feature stories and are sprinkling features of this kind throughout the news programs. . . . Even heavy stories may be lightened frequently by viewing or telling them through the eyes and ears of the personality involved. Wherever there is a human being, there should be human interest.[7]

Psychologists know the importance of interest as a factor in learning and assimilating knowledge. Interest and ability to understand are closely related. Ruth Strang, in a study of the reading patterns of 112 persons of various economic and social levels, found that one of the chief reasons given for finding an article enjoyable was that it was easy to read. When the same subjects were asked why it was easy to read, they said it was interesting.[8] Hyman and Sheatsley in a recent article say that "the widest possible dissemination of material may be ineffective if it is not geared to the public's interest."[9]

But what is the public's interest? Can we lump all news together, say that the public is interested in news, and cite for

[7] White, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

[8] Strang, Ruth. *Exploration in Reading Patterns.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1942. p. 99.

[9] Hyman, Herbert H., and Sheatsley, Paul B. "Some Reasons Why Information Campaigns Fail," *Public Opinion Quarterly*, XI (Fall, 1947), p. 415.

our evidence the surveys mentioned, or must we make finer distinctions? How much can we spice news programs with the human-interest items suggested by the Associated Press? Time must still be allotted for "heavy" news which does not lend itself to being told "through the eyes and ears of the personality involved." Can it be made interesting as well?

The findings of Ruth Strang on the interrelatedness of ease of reading and interest seem to offer a helpful solution. If we cannot predict or control the interest value of heavy news, perhaps we can predict and control the ease of understanding, and through that measure get at the interest as well. A recent study by Rudolf Flesch for the Macfadden Women's Group also points to the high relation between ease of reading and interest. He compared the Daniel Starch readership ratings of more than one thousand advertisements with their reading difficulty by his formula—the readership ratings are gathered by a continuous survey of the opinions of a number of persons who read particular advertisements in national magazines. He found that the advertisements that were easiest to read were read most, and those that were hardest to read were read least.[10] In other words, appeal to the reader was related to reading ease.

If the same relationship operates in listening, we can have an additional check on interest by measuring how easy or hard something is to understand when heard. To answer these questions mentioned in the last few paragraphs, we undertook a small experiment. We analyzed the difficulty of a group of news scripts on the basis of readability, and then compared the predicted difficulty of the scripts with actual listener understanding and interest in these newscasts.

Two readability formulas were used to analyze the scripts. The Dale-Chall formula measures difficulty by two counts: a count of unfamiliar words and a count of average sentence length. Roughly, a script that has a greater percentage of unfamiliar words and on the average has longer sentences is considered more difficult than one with more familiar words and shorter sentences. The predictions of difficulty are given in terms of grade-levels. That is, when a script is rated as seventh- or eighth-grade level (7–8), it means that persons who have

[10] *Writing to the Millions.* New York: Macfadden Women's Group, 1946.

completed approximately seven or eight years of schooling should be able to read and understand it.[11] The Flesch formula is based on three counts: the number of affixes (prefixes, suffixes, inflectional endings, and the like) per 100 words, average sentence length, and the number of personal references (such as names, personal pronouns, and the like) per 100 words. A large number of affixes, long sentences, and few personal references increase difficulty. Flesch has arranged two types of predictions. One is in terms of difficulty (0, very easy, to 6, very difficult). Another is based on grade placements.[12] We used the grade-placement predictions in the study here reported because we wanted the difficulty ratings of the two formulas to be comparable.

The United Press newscasts read over Station WOSU in January, February, and March, 1947, were arranged chronologically. From them we selected a sample of 30 scripts dealing with foreign, national, state, and local events. These scripts were then analyzed by the two formulas. Both formulas put most of the scripts in the ninth-grade through the college-graduate level of difficulty. Roughly, foreign news fell within the ninth-grade through the twelfth-grade category, national news fell on the thirteenth to fifteenth grade-level, and state news was hardest of all, with the majority on the college-graduate level. The original plan was to include scripts that ranged from the easiest to the hardest. We therefore went through the three-month collection of scripts and pulled out several that seemed very easy. They were found to be at the 5–6 and 7–8 grade-levels by the Dale-Chall formula and seventh- and eighth-grade levels by the Flesch formula.

Eighteen newscripts, ranging from the easiest to the hardest, were recorded by Glenn Elstrom, staff announcer and assistant program director at Station WOSU. The experimental recording was made on a standard 16-inch disc at 33.3 rotations per minute. The easy, medium, and hard items were included in each series of recordings.

[11] Dale, Edgar, and Chall, Jeanne S. "A Formula for Predicting Readability," and "Instructions," EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH BULLETIN, XXVII (January 21, 1948, and February 17, 1948), pp 11–20 and 37–54.

[12] Flesch, *op. cit.*, and *The Art of Plain Talk* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946). The Flesch formula has been revised since our scripts were analyzed in May, 1947. *See* "A New Readability Yardstick," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, XXXII (June, 1948), pp. 221–33.

To test the listener's understanding of the newscasts, two measures were used. The first was a subjective measure based on the following five-point scale:

| | Rating |
|---|---|
| I didn't understand this story at all | 1 |
| Most of this was over my head | 2 |
| I understood the story fairly well | 3 |
| I understood all but a little of it | 4 |
| I understood the whole story perfectly | 5 |

In addition to the five-point scale, we constructed four objective multiple-choice questions covering the main points on nine of the 18 broadcasts. The objective questions were constructed on only 9 newscasts because we wanted to be able to administer the entire test in one sitting of less than one hour.

The following is an example of a newscast of approximately seventh-grade difficulty measured by the formulas and the type of questions asked on it:

It was late at night at Hickam Field in Hawaii. A group of people anxiously awaited the arrival of an army transport plane from China.

Suddenly the roar of engines crept out of the night and then the lights of the transport winked off and on. The plane came down to a good landing, rolled to a stop. The door flung open, and out stepped General George Marshall—America's new Secretary of State.

General Marshall seemed to pay no attention to the few people who were on hand to greet him. News of his arrival was kept under wraps. He looked around for Mrs. Marshall, and when the General's lady stepped out of a waiting army limousine Marshall kissed her.

After greeting his wife the new State Secretary told newsmen: "I'm very glad to be here and to find Mrs. Marshall looking so well."

General Marshall demonstrated his ability at the fine art of diplomacy in the finesse with which he turned off a question by newsmen who wanted to know if he was a democrat.

Said Marshall, "I am an army officer and presumably will be Secretary of State. And I am an Episcopalian."

The General said he'd spend several days in Hawaii with Mrs. Marshall; then both would return to Washington. He declined to make any comment whatsoever about his new job.

1. The plane carrying General Marshall landed in
   .....*a*. China
   .....*b*. Hawaii
   .....*c*. Washington, D. C.
   .....*d*. San Francisco
2. The group of people who met the General
   .....*a*. was large
   .....*b*. was small
   .....*c*. were mostly Marshall's relatives
   .....*d*. were army men

3. Newspaper men wanted to know if General Marshall was
   .....*a.* an Episcopalian .....*c.* an army officer
   .....b. to be Secretary of State .....*d.* a democrat
4. The General told the newspapermen
   .....*a.* nothing about his new job .....*c.* about conditions in China
   .....*b.* about his new job .....*d.* about world affairs

The following five-point scale was used to measure the listener's interest:

When I hear news like this on the radio,

| | Rating |
|---|---|
| I turn to another station | 1 |
| I find that my mind wanders most of the time | 2 |
| I listen, but I'm not very much interested | 3 |
| I listen with interest | 4 |
| I listen very intently | 5 |

One hundred college Freshmen, predominantly men from Franklin and Ohio State Universities, were used as subjects. They were told that this was a research project and that honest ratings were needed. They were instructed not to put names on the booklets since the scores would remain anonymous.

Listening conditions for the experiment were much more favorable than they would be in the average home. There were none of the usual distractions, no conversation, no activities other than listening.

Two other factors entered into our experiment to make the listening more favorable than would normally be expected. First, our subjects were college Freshmen, above the average of the general listening population. Second, the news that they listened to was from three to six months old. It would be expected, then, that this group would understand all but a few news stories. The data, however, show that they did not.

For each of the 18 newscasts we had two ratings by each of the 100 subjects—a judgment of understanding and a judgment of interest. For nine of these newscasts, we also had answers to four multiple-choice questions.

A mean judgment of understanding and interest was computed for each newscast. This was done by giving a weight of 5 to the extreme right of each scale (highest interest and highest understanding), a 4 to the next, and so on, and a 1 to the extreme left (lowest interest and understanding). For the judgment of understanding, a mean of 4 indicates that, on the

average, the subjects judged the newscast as "I understood all but a little of it." For each of the 9 newscasts for which questions had been devised, we computed the mean number correct. A mean of 4 would indicate that the entire group had all four questions correct. Intercorrelations between these three measures and the predictions of the formulas are given in Table I.

TABLE I

INTERCORRELATIONS OF DALE-CHALL PREDICTIONS AND FLESCH PREDICTIONS WITH CERTAIN MEASURES*

| | Flesch Predictions | Judgment of Understanding | Judgment of Interest | Number of Questions Correct |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) |
| Dale-Chall predictions | .88 | .76 | .77 | .74 |
| Flesch predictions | ..... | .63 | .63 | .72 |
| Judgment of understanding | ..... | ..... | .93 | .90 |
| Judgment of interest | ..... | ..... | ..... | .82 |

* Negative signs of correlation coefficients of formula predictions with other measures have been reflected for clarity of presentation.

All the measures given in Table I are highly interrelated. The highest correlation is between the judgment of understanding and the judgment of interest. The listeners judged as interesting those newscasts they understood—or made a special effort to understand those newscasts that they were interested in. The correlation of .90 between the judgments of understanding and the number of questions correct shows that the subjects judged adequately their ability to understand what they heard.

The correlation coefficients of the formula predictions with the other measures are somewhat lower but still are definitely related to them. The Dale-Chall predictions correlate slightly higher than the Flesch formula with the two subjective judgments of understanding and interest. Both formulas are also highly related in their predictions.

The intercorrelations showed us that the formula predictions are related to the judgments of understanding and interest and to scores on the objective questions. That is, on the whole, the scripts that had low predicted difficulty by the formulas were understood best and were judged to be most interesting. The scripts that had predictions of highest difficulty were least understood and judged to be least interesting.

We did not have a clear notion of how well the newscasts on the different grade-levels were understood or how interested the listeners were in them. To get this information, we ranked the newscasts on the basis of the Dale-Chall predictions, and next to each we listed the mean judgment of understanding and the percentage of subjects who checked either 5 ("I understood the whole story perfectly") or 4 ("I understood all but a little of it") on the scale of understanding. We counted only those listeners who checked the two highest points of understanding on the scale, because we felt that listeners should be able to understand what they hear better than "fairly well."

TABLE II

Comparison of Listener Understanding with Formula Predictions

| Grade-Level by Dale-Chall Formula | Number of Newscasts | Judgments on Scale of Understanding | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean Rating | Per Cent Rating 4 or 5 |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| 5–6 and 7–8 ..... | 6 | 4.47 | 83.5 |
| 9–10 and 11–12 ..... | 6 | 3.60 | 49.8 |
| 13–15 and 16+ ..... | 6 | 3.57 | 50.5 |

The news stories ranked in order of difficulty by the formula did not show a one-to-one relation with the listeners' judgments of understanding. There was a close agreement only for the easiest stories. Above the eighth-grade level of difficulty, the listeners did not well differentiate their understanding of the stories, as compared with the formula predictions.

Table II shows that the six newscasts with predicted difficulties of 5–6 and 7–8 grade-levels were rated as either 4 or 5 (high understanding) on the scale of understanding by 83.5 per cent of the subjects (*see* Column 4). The mean judgment of understanding for these same stories was 4.47, between "I understood all but a little bit of it" and "I understood the whole story perfectly." We can see from this table that the newscasts with predicted difficulties of the fifth through the eighth grade were judged as well within their understanding by more than 80 per cent of the students. There is a definite drop in judgment of understanding for newscasts rated more difficult than

the eighth-grade level, but this drop does not continue consistently from the twelfth-grade to the college level.

The trend of decreasing comprehension with increasing difficulty as measured by the formula is clearer when we compare the Dale-Chall predictions with the results of the objective questions. Table III breaks down the news stories into four groups (*see* Column 2), the mean number of questions answered correctly (*see* Column 3), and the percentage of the group that answered either 3 or 4 questions on these newscasts correctly (*see* Column 4).

TABLE III

COMPARISON OF THE RESULTS ON THE OBJECTIVE TEST WITH THE FORMULA PREDICTIONS

| GRADE-LEVEL BY DALE-CHALL FORMULA | NUMBER OF NEWSCASTS | QUESTIONS CORRECT | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean Number | Per Cent Answering 3 or 4 |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| 7–8 | 3 | 3.15 | 79.0 |
| 9–12 | 4 | 2.45 | 52.3 |
| 13–15 | 1 | 2.42 | 48.0 |
| 16+ | 1 | 2.22 | 34.0 |

Table IV breaks down the formula predictions and compares them with the mean judgment of interest and the percentage of subjects who rated these newscasts on the interest scale either 4 or 5 ("I listen intently" or "I listen with interest"). This table shows a consistent drop in interest with increasing difficulty by the formula predictions. When the 13–15 and 16+ grade-levels were reached, only 33 per cent of the Freshmen showed a definite interest in what they heard.

ON THE basis of this limited study, we found that the readability formulas will predict roughly three levels of listening difficulty for our college Freshmen—easy, medium, and hard, when compared with their judgments of understanding and ability to answer objective questions. The predictions were most consistent for the two extremes, with a good deal of variation between them. Is the prediction good enough to justify using a readability formula to predict listening difficulty? Before this question can be answered either positively or negatively, we must remember that neither readability for-

mula used in this experiment has perfect prediction even for reading. They have both been demonstrated to be good approximations of the difficulty of reading materials.

Considering the small number of newscasts used in our sample, we believe that the predictions of the readability formulas were also good estimates of listening difficulty. We know, for example, that if a newscast has a predicted difficulty of eighth-grade level or below, it will be understood by a significantly greater number of listeners than one which has a predicted difficulty of college or college-graduate level. There may be variations in the middle levels of difficulty, but, taken as a group, the newscasts from the ninth- through the twelfth-

TABLE IV

COMPARISON OF LISTENER INTEREST WITH FORMULA PREDICTIONS

| GRADE-LEVEL BY DALE-CHALL FORMULA | NUMBER OF NEWSCASTS | JUDGMENT OF INTEREST | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Mean Rating | Per Cent Rating 4 or 5 |
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
| 5–6 and 7–8 ..... | 6 | 3.66 | 67.5 |
| 9–10 and 11–12 ..... | 6 | 3.10 | 41.7 |
| 13–15 and 16+ ..... | 6 | 2.84 | 33.2 |

grade level will be understood by fewer listeners than those newscasts on the eighth-grade level and below.

Since our subjects were college Freshmen who should have been able to understand all the newscasts but the few on the college-graduate level, the decreasing comprehension with increasing difficulty, as measured by the formulas, becomes more significant. It is our hypothesis that if the same newscasts were tested on a cross section of the population, there would be a much more definite relationship between the predictions of the formulas and the judgment of understanding and ability to answer the objective questions.

Our second question was, Can the same difficulty levels that are used for printed materials be used for spoken materials? The answer to this question depended upon how much we wanted listeners to get out of what they heard. If we wanted well over half of our freshman listeners to be able to answer correctly at least three-fourths of the questions asked about what they heard, then the formula predictions seemed to underestimate the listening difficulty of the newscasts. Table

III shows that only 48 per cent of our subjects were able to answer correctly three or four questions out of four on newscasts on the 13–15 grade-level of difficulty.

From our data we cannot draw definite conclusions on the adjustment of readability levels to predict the listener's comprehension. But our data, although meager, seem to indicate that, beginning with fairly difficult material (ninth grade and above), the listening difficulty is probably a grade or two above the reading difficulty. For example, a story rated approximately eleventh- to twelfth-grade reading level probably rises to a level of thirteenth to fifteenth or sixteenth grade when heard.

Our data showed a definite relationship between comprehension and interest, as can be seen from the high correlations between the judgment of understanding and interest (.93), and between the number of objective questions correct and judgment of interest (.82).

Our data again indicate that readability formulas can predict interest. Interest seems to operate in this way: the easiest newscasts received the highest interest scores, the hardest received the lowest interest scores. In the middle there was a good deal of variation but, on the whole, these interest scores were between the two extremes.

THIS experiment shows that with adjustments, a readability formula can be a helpful tool in predicting the listener's understanding and interest. In a sense, it has proved the obvious, but sometimes the obvious has to be stressed before it is applied widely. If even college Freshmen prefer simple news stories, the population as a whole will probably show a greater preference for them. What is a simple news story? The newscast quoted here is a good example.[13] It received one of the highest ratings both on measures of understanding and on the interest measure. Ninety-one per cent of our listeners marked this newscast either 4 or 5 on the scale of understanding, 79 per cent answered correctly at least three-fourths of the questions, and 69 per cent marked it either 4 or 5 on the interest scale. It had a predicted difficulty of seventh grade by both formulas.

Contrast it with the following newscast which received the

[13] *See* page 146.

lowest comprehension and interest scores. Only 31 per cent of our subjects marked it 4 or 5 on the scale of understanding, 34 per cent answered correctly at least three-fourths of the objective questions, and only 14 per cent marked it 4 or 5 on the interest scale. Both formulas rated this newscast on the college-graduate level:

The Senate Finance Committee has amended the partial appropriations bill to permit county budget commissions to distribute their allocations of sales tax funds on the basis of need.

This corrects last fall's so-called sleeper, which authorized the commissions to distribute the money on the basis of comparative tax receipts.

Hamilton's Senator Stanley McKie proposed the amendment to restore the old formula. He affirms the Hamilton County delegates.

Newscasts like this one are common for state news in Ohio. We found from our sampling of three month's news that the majority of state news fell at the college-graduate level.

Here is another example of a difficult newscast. It was rated approximately thirteenth grade by both formulas and received low comprehension and interest scores. Only 38 per cent of our listeners marked this newscast as either 4 or 5 on the scale of understanding, 47 per cent answered correctly at least three-fourths of the questions about it, and only 21 per cent marked it either 4 or 5 on the interest scale.

Republican Senator Knowland of California says he expects considerable support for his plan to use three billion dollars of any saving as payment on the public debt. This, too, would hurt chances for lower taxes.

Democratic Senator George of Georgia has offered some specific suggestions for government economizing. He believes military spending can be trimmed one billion dollars without endangering national security. He also recommends that a half-million government employees be fired.

Top army and navy leaders have warned that any limits on requested military and foreign relief funds may be disastrous.

Contrast this script with the following newscast which had a predicted eighth-grade difficulty by the formulas and received high interest and comprehension scores. Seventy-eight per cent of the listeners marked it either 4 or 5 on the scale of understanding, 79 per cent answered correctly at least three-fourths of the objective questions about it, and 70 per cent marked it either 4 or 5 on the interest scale.

[*Continued on page 168*]

# The Birth Rate and Teacher Demand

*By* HAROLD J. BOWERS

In the formulation of educational policies, changes in the number and location of the persons to be served are factors which should receive first consideration. Since change in birth rate is soon reflected in school enrollments, it is highly important that educational leaders study the recently accelerated birth rate with its implications for additional teachers, more classrooms, and a reorganization of school districts.

The evidence submitted herein suggests that education is headed for a period of unprecedented expansion. The primary purpose of this article is to consider the relationship between a rapidly increasing enrollment and teacher supply. Second, it is hoped that the findings reported will provoke certain questions for each school community in the state. What does this trend imply for local teacher need? What effect will it have on current building plans? What does it mean in terms of additional classrooms? What effect will it have on total school expenditures, and on the distribution of expenditures at the elementary- and secondary-school levels?

In an attempt to predict future enrollments by grades and total, the accompanying tables were prepared. The data on the number of births since 1925 given in Table I were obtained from the Bureau of Vital Statistics. The enrollment by grades from 1932 to 1947 given in Table II was taken from the annual reports of superintendents to the Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction. From the corresponding figures for each year in these tables, it will be found that the first-grade enrollment for a given year up to 1947 averages 103.6 per cent of the births six years earlier. This surprising percentage is explained by the high rate of retention in the first grade and the fact that Ohio is a state gaining in population by migration, a fact not fully reflected in the number of births.

From the figures in Columns 2 and 3 of Table II for the years 1932-47, the average enrollment computed in the second grade is 91.7 per cent of the enrollment in the first grade of the previous year. Thus for succeeding pairs of columns in this table, the following series of percentages are computed. The third-grade enrollment is 98.3 per cent of the enrollment in

the second grade of the previous year. The fourth-grade enrollment is 96 per cent of the third-grade enrollment of the previous year. The fifth-grade enrollment is 98.8 per cent of the fourth-grade enrollment of the previous year. The sixth-grade enrollment is 96.7 per cent of the fifth-grade enrollment of the previous year. The seventh-grade enrollment is 102.3 per cent of the sixth-grade enrollment of the previous year. Here again, a high rate of retention is indicated. The eighth-grade enrollment is 94.1 per cent of the seventh-grade enrollment of the previous year.

TABLE I

NUMBER OF BIRTHS EACH YEAR FROM 1926 TO 1947 IN OHIO

| Year | Number of Births | Year | Number of Births |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | (2) | (1) | (2) |
| 1926 | 124258 | 1937 | 107797 |
| 1927 | 123425 | 1938 | 112988 |
| 1928 | 120486 | 1939 | 109271 |
| 1929 | 116433 | 1940 | 114895 |
| 1930 | 117611 | 1941 | 122456 |
| 1931 | 108276 | 1942 | 143610 |
| 1932 | 102184 | 1943 | 143064 |
| 1933 | 95962 | 1944 | 132531 |
| 1934 | 100164 | 1945 | 131910 |
| 1935 | 101377 | 1946 | 169645 |
| 1936 | 104016 | 1947 | 197236 |

ON THE assumption that the same factors in operation from 1932 to 1947 would continue to operate in much the same way in the future, these findings were used to predict future grade and total enrollments for the next fourteen years. These estimated figures are given in the lower part of Table II.

For example, 197,236 births in 1947 should produce a first-grade enrollment in 1953 of 204,336, a second-grade enrollment in 1954 of 187,376, a third-grade enrollment in 1955 of 184,190, a fourth-grade enrollment in 1956 of 176,822, a fifth-grade enrollment in 1957 of 174,700, a sixth-grade enrollment in 1958 of 168,934, a seventh-grade enrollment in 1959 of 172,819, and an eighth-grade enrollment of 162,622 in 1960.

By comparing the 1947 eighth-grade enrollment of 82,507 with the predicted eighth-grade enrollment of 162,622 in

1960, it will be noted that the enrollment will be practically doubled. It is also to be noted that the 197,236 births of 1947, which will produce an anticipated enrollment of 162,622 in 1960, is also practically twice the number of births in 1934, which produced a current eighth-grade enrollment of 82,507.

TABLE II

THE ACTUAL FIGURES OF ENROLLMENT IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF OHIO FROM 1932 TO 1946 ARE HERE PROJECTED BY ESTIMATES TO 1960

| Year | First Grade | Second Grade | Third Grade | Fourth Grade | Fifth Grade | Sixth Grade | Seventh Grade | Eighth Grade | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
| 1932 ..... | 128188 | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 938512 |
| 1933 ..... | 125600 | 116361 | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 930965 |
| 1934 ..... | 121531 | 113097 | 113651 | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 916956 |
| 1935 ..... | 116793 | 109543 | 111526 | 111808 | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 895332 |
| 1936 ..... | 117453 | 106717 | 108890 | 110201 | 111202 | ..... | ..... | ..... | 886637 |
| 1937 ..... | 109989 | 105680 | 103619 | 106703 | 107901 | 105899 | ..... | ..... | 852362 |
| 1938 ..... | 109878 | 103638 | 106132 | 101976 | 104954 | 104487 | 107860 | ..... | 844215 |
| 1939 ..... | 102776 | 99493 | 101519 | 100746 | 100719 | 101612 | 106520 | 102602 | 815987 |
| 1940 ..... | 104087 | 94449 | 97889 | 96335 | 99714 | 97986 | 103971 | 101023 | 795454 |
| 1941 ..... | 106554 | 95410 | 93465 | 92989 | 95879 | 97391 | 100751 | 98470 | 780909 |
| 1942 ..... | 109089 | 100389 | 92640 | 89175 | 93173 | 93848 | 100301 | 94383 | 772998 |
| 1943 ..... | 113884 | 101873 | 98568 | 90284 | 89150 | 90783 | 95836 | 93420 | 773798 |
| 1944 ..... | 117672 | 104543 | 100158 | 91907 | 88980 | 85639 | 92868 | 89736 | 771503 |
| 1945 ..... | 116919 | 108298 | 103265 | 94040 | 90469 | 86102 | 88344 | 87561 | 774998 |
| 1946 ..... | 117647 | 107862 | 106272 | 96675 | 91838 | 86923 | 87681 | 82853 | 777751 |
| | Figures below Are Estimates | | | | | | | | |
| 1947 ..... | 126864 | 107882 | 106028 | 102021 | 95514 | 88807 | 88922 | 82507 | 798545 |
| 1948 ..... | 148779 | 116334 | 106048 | 101786 | 100796 | 92362 | 90849 | 83675 | 840629 |
| 1949 ..... | 148245 | 136430 | 114356 | 101806 | 100564 | 97469 | 94486 | 85488 | 878844 |
| 1950 ..... | 137302 | 135940 | 134110 | 109781 | 100584 | 97245 | 99710 | 88911 | 903583 |
| 1951 ..... | 136658 | 125905 | 133629 | 128745 | 108463 | 97264 | 99481 | 93821 | 923972 |
| 1952 ..... | 175752 | 125315 | 123764 | 128283 | 127200 | 104883 | 99501 | 93611 | 978309 |
| 1953 ..... | 204336 | 161164 | 123184 | 118813 | 126743 | 123002 | 107205 | 93630 | 1058167 |
| 1954 ..... | ..... | 187376 | 158424 | 118256 | 117387 | 122560 | 125831 | 100964 | ..... |
| 1955 ..... | ..... | ..... | 184190 | 152087 | 116836 | 113513 | 125378 | 118406 | ..... |
| 1956 ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 176822 | 150261 | 112980 | 116123 | 117980 | ..... |
| 1957 ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 174700 | 145302 | 115578 | 109271 | ..... |
| 1958 ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 168934 | 148643 | 108758 | ..... |
| 1959 ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 172819 | 139873 | ..... |
| 1960 ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | ..... | 162622 | ..... |

From the table and the illustrations given, it is evident that if the present birth rate continues, or becomes somewhat stable at a figure approximating 150,000 per year, the elementary-school enrollment will, in the next ten years, be twice the current total enrollment of 798,545. This does not necessarily mean that we shall need twice as many elementary-school teachers as are currently employed, but it does mean that we shall need many more teachers than we have ever previously employed. Taking into consideration the increased demand due to increased enrollments, the normal withdrawals from the

[*Continued on page 168*]

# Changes in Social Status of Elementary-School Pupils

*By* ANNA MARIE STAKER

A CHILD can achieve satisfactory relationships with his teachers and yet not be accepted socially by his classmates. In the experiment described here, the writer attempted to study children as other children see them and to find what a teacher can do to promote good relationships among children.[1] Two types of tests were used: sociometric and "Guess Who." A sociometric test is an instrument to measure the amount of organization shown by a social group. The "Guess Who" device was planned as a means of discovering an individual's general reputation among his classmates.

The children used in this study were enrolled in the fifth grade of the Grove City schools. The average enrollment of the group for the year was 32; the children's ages were from ten to thirteen years; their intelligence quotients ranged from 59 to 129, with a median score of 102. The environments of the children varied from average homes, socially and economically, to homes which had the barest necessities of life.[2]

The pupils had come from two fourth-grade groups and had been given the sociometric test and "Guess Who" in December in the fourth grade. The writer gave both tests in December, a year later, when the children were in the fifth grade, and repeated the tests in May. The tests are designated in this report by the time at which they were given as A, B, or C. Fourteen girls and 13 boys took the tests in December of the fourth grade (A) and again in December of fifth grade (B). The average scores of the 14 girls on the sociometric tests were 28 at A and 42 at B; for the boys, 23 and 37. Thirteen of these girls and 12 of the boys were tested five months later (C). The girls made an average score of 44 on the test; the boys, 38.

"Choice status" of the individual does not rapidly change. Evidence given by Jennings showed in the cases cited that reliability coefficients ranged high when successive tests involv-

[1] "Changes in Social Status between Grades and during the School Year." 1944. Master's thesis on file in the library, Ohio State University.

[2] These data were obtained for Grades III–VIII by an Ohio State University Workshop group, under the direction of F. P. Robinson.

ing the making of choices were given.[3] Moreno reports that 95 per cent of the choices made remained stable over a period of 90 days,[4] and Bonney refers to a study made by Joan Crisswell in a New York city public elementary school, in which first and second choices remained stable over a period of six weeks, to the extent of 36 per cent. Sixty-nine per cent of the first choices, which were most resistant to change persisted during the six-weeks period.[5]

The results of the present study showed that, even with lapses of 5 and 12 months, in spite of change of building and some change in class make-up, there was a substantial degree of consistency in status. The difference in the situations of tests A and B could best be explained in this manner; at the time of the first test (A), the subjects were pupils in separate fourth-grade rooms; at the time of the second test (B), they had been in a fifth-grade room in a different building for four months.

The data showed that there was a rather high relationship between stability of status from one year to the next. The coefficient of correlation for tests A and B was .68. Five months lapsed between tests B and C, but subjects remained in the same fifth-grade room during that time. The coefficient of correlation for tests B and C was .87, which was much higher than the coefficient for tests A and B. The relatively high coefficient of correlation between tests B and C meant the pupil who was at the top of the range of scores in test B was at or near the top in test C, and so on down the line, the pupils at or near the bottom of the range of scores in test B being at or near the bottom of the scores in test C. While the stability of status was higher over a short period than over a long period, these results show a surprising stability under markedly changing conditions.

THE "Guess Who" test given at the same testing periods showed a coefficient of correlation of .81 between the results of A and B. This indicated a considerable amount of uniformity over a year of time in the attitudes of others toward the children studied. With the lapse of five months between B and C in the same room, the coefficient of correlation was .86.

[3] Jennings, Helen Hall. *Leadership and Isolation*. New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1943. pp. 11, 12.

[4] Moreno, Jacob L. "Foundations of Sociometry," *Sociometry*, IV (February, 1941), pp. 15–35.

[5] Bonney, Merl E. "A Study of Social Status on the Second Grade Level," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, LX (June 5, 1942), pp. 227-82.

This also indicates a great amount of uniformity in the attitudes toward the children studied within the year. It is surprising that, even with change of school and a partial shift in make-up of the class, a child's reputation should remain so unchanged. Symonds and Jackson state that

> evidently the reputation which a pupil wins from his fellow pupils at the beginning of the year refers to something which is not merely a superficial, temporary quality of behavior, but a form of adjustment which tends to persist.[6]

The sociometric scores and "Guess Who" scores at A, B, and C were correlated. The coefficient of correlation at A was .56; at B was .76; at C, .74. In each of the three testing times the correlation between sociometric scores and "Guess Who" scores was positive, thus showing some relationship between acceptability and reputation. The highest relationship was while the children were in the fifth grade (times B and C).

By way of summary, two conclusions were drawn concerning the relationship between sociometric scores and "Guess Who" scores. First, a high positive correlation existed between the measures of acceptability, and those children most highly accepted had positive reputations among the group. Second, this relationship was higher while the children were in the fifth grade than during the time they were in the fourth grade. This was interpreted to mean that the children at fifth-grade level chose associates with regard to reputations among the group to a greater extent than at the fourth-grade level.

What personality traits are the most popular individuals judged to have? What are deemed to be the characteristics of the least popular? Standards of judging the social importance of traits change with the situation and the children's ages. A child may be popular in Grade IV because he has the characteristics that make for popularity in that grade. In Grade V, he may show marked loss in popularity because different traits from those he possesses have assumed importance. An analysis of the data showed first, that the stability of status was more marked within the year than in these two successive years; and second, that personality traits have bearing upon the social success of individuals.



[6] Symonds, Percival M., and Jackson, Claude E. *Measurement of the Personality Adjustment of High School Pupils.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1935. p. 98.

# EDITORIAL COMMENT

## Ohio in the Making

UNDER this title, Arthur R. Harper has written, and the College of Education has published, the first general account of the geological history of Ohio for the layman.[1] It has been prepared especially to meet the needs of teachers and pupils in the schools of Ohio.

Mr. Harper's book fills a long-felt want. There has been no lack of good books that deal with geology on a world-wide or continent-wide basis, and there is a great deal of material on different aspects of the geology of Ohio. But this is scattered throughout many monographs, reports, and technical articles, and much of it is written for the specialist rather than the general reader.

There is a growing realization that some knowledge of geology is basic to an understanding of human culture. The geology and climate of a region, together with the state of knowledge and the arts that obtain, very largely determine, not only how men in that region make their living, but the kind of government and other social institutions that they establish. No attempt to understand the agriculture, industry, and government of Ohio that fails to take account of the geological basis on which these rest, can be very effective.

It is true, of course, that in an advanced technological age like our own, the way men in a region live is determined not only by the climate and geology of that particular part of the earth's surface but also by conditions in the whole country, the continent, the world. A war in Europe, a drought in South America, or discoveries of new gold deposits in South Africa affect us here in Ohio. The steel industry of Youngstown uses iron ore from the Lake Superior region and depends for its prosperity on the world-wide demand for its products. These facts tend to decrease the relative importance of local geology as compared with its importance in earlier ages when man was more largely dependent upon the resources of his immediate community. But these facts are more than counterbalanced by

[1] Harper, Arthur R. *Ohio in the Making: a Brief Geological History of Ohio.* Columbus, Ohio: College of Education, Ohio State University, 1948. xi+80 pp. (Single copies $1; liberal discounts for quantity orders. Ohio State University Print Shop).

the complexities of life in an industrial age, the increasing pressure of population, and the growing demands each person in a technological society makes upon natural resources. Moreover, one's own community is the proper starting place for an understanding of the world at large. So there is actually greater need than ever for the citizen to know something about the geology of his own region.

The present booklet serves its purpose admirably. The author, who is a field naturalist for the Ohio Division of Conservation and Natural Resources, spends a large part of his time working with teachers and pupils in the public schools of the state. He has a clear picture of their needs and a fine sense for appropriate ways of presenting materials for their use. The book is full of references to the industry, agriculture, scenery, and so on, of various localities in Ohio as these have been affected by the underlying geological structure. The manuscript of this book was read critically by three geologists familiar with the geology of this state; hence, we can be assured that the treatment is sound.

The book should find wide use in the schools of the state. Elementary-school teachers and secondary-school teachers of geography, general science, agriculture, home economics, social studies, and other subjects will find it helpful. Many high-school pupils also will want to read it.

R. H. E.

THE Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the Ohio Society for Crippled Children will be held October 30–31 at the Hotel Deshler-Wallick, Columbus. Meetings are open to the public. A preliminary program announcing speakers and subjects will be available October 1 at the organization's headquarters, 5 West Broad St., Columbus 15.

ERB

# READINGS

HOFFMAN, SYLVAN, AND GRATTAN, C. HARTLEY, editors. *News of the Nation: a Newspaper History of the United States.* Garden City, New York: Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., 1943 and 1947. Nos. 1–45.)

*News of the Nation*, the editor tells us in the introduction, is designed to present the facts of American history "streamlined . . . in an entertaining, easy-to-absorb, quick-glance-and-we-have-it style." Each of the issues which are dated from April 14, 1493, to September 2, 1945, reviews events of the several months or years previous. Illustrations are numerous.

This reviewer cannot fully agree with Allan Nevins that this newspaper history will lend interest and color to history, or that it seems to be accurate. The flavor is that of the textbook, though the shape of the dish has been changed. Headlines replace rubrics. Apart from a few minor items, such as fashion notes, the basic information is what one finds in a routine textbook. There is little or no suspense: the reporters and editorial writers obviously know what is going to happen, because they have read their textbooks. Occasionally their knowledge is inaccurate. Thus we read that Columbus ignored "the prevailing belief that the world is flat and that any voyager sailing across the uncharted sea would eventually drop off into space" (April 14, 1493, page 2); Congress "submitted to the people the Articles of Confederation" (May 4, 1778, page 2); Hawaii was annexed "to frustrate alleged Japanese designs on the islands" (July 17, 1898, page 4); Theodore Roosevelt became the assistant secretary of the Navy in 1896 and vice-president in 1900 (September 14, 1901, page 1); the "U. S. Joins World Court" (November 13, 1929, page 3).

In this reviewer's opinion, occasional minor inaccuracy would be acceptable if only the spirit of the past could have been captured. As Lord Acton said, "Dulness is a greater enemy to the progress of truth than even error. For error serves truth against her will—dulness injures her whether it will or no."

The idea of presenting history in newspaper style has merit, and the editors of *News of the Nation* seem to have worked hard. They cover a great variety of material. But greater interest and real flavor could have been achieved with less labor by reproducing parts of issues of real newspapers, with some of Bache's, Greeley's, and Grady's editorials, and with authentic old patent-medicine advertisements. The virtue of a text is logical organization and, within the limits of space, completeness; the vice of a text too often is dullness. If we have dullness without organization and completeness, we have not gained much by abandoning the traditional but, after all, convenient form of the bound book.

EARL S. POMEROY

SCHAEFER-SIMMERN, HENRY. *The Unfolding of Artistic Activity.* Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 1948. xiii+201 pp.

A handsome book, this account of art as process reflects in appearance the creative integrity of the author that is established by the text. The

theory developed is clear, direct, and pertinently illustrated. It provides an incisive penetration into the nature of art activity. Altogether, this is a healthy and welcome addition to art-education literature. We recommend it as a "must" to the art teacher.

Mr. Schaefer-Simmern centers on a basic problem. Are there operative principles governing "that specific mental activity by which a work of art comes into existence"? Through extensive research with varied groups over a period of years, he comes out with an affirmative answer. In the opinion of the reviewer, what he has to say is valid and important.

JAMES W. GRIMES

FRIESE, JOHN F. *Course Making in Industrial Education.* Peoria, Illinois: Manual Arts Press, 1946. 297 pp.

The purposes of this book are clearly stated, and the purposes of the school are consistently referred to as criteria to be observed in the selection and organization of course materials. Furthermore, emphasis is put upon content as a means to an end and upon the fact that the teacher and the methods he uses will determine its effectiveness.

Industrial arts and vocational education are seen as areas of great importance in the educative process because by nature these subjects abound in problem-solving situations. Furthermore, these subjects, when co-operatively taught, are seen as a means of vitalizing the educative process and of equalizing the educational opportunities of those who do not find enthusiasm for, and interest in, the traditional subject-matter areas.

Course making is seen as a co-operative enterprise which should be the concern of the whole school staff. Thus, the whole staff should develop an awareness of, and concern about, interrelationships. A program of industrial education should be sufficiently flexible to meet the needs of the students enrolled, with respect to the acquisition of skills and technical knowledge, and as a means of broadening their general education.

Examples of developed curriculum and courses are presented. While modern educational thought and practice emphasize co-operative development of purposes, this practice is not stressed by the author. Teachers of industrial-education subjects concerned with curriculums and course development will find many helpful suggestions in this book.

ROBERT E. SMITH

HOULE, CYRIL O.; BURR, ELBERT W.; HAMILTON, THOMAS H.; AND YALE, JOHN R. *The Armed Services and Adult Education.* Washington, D. C.: American Council on Education, 1947. xv+257 pp.

Against the background of a carefully documented, historical account of the programs of off-duty education developed by the various branches of the armed services during the Second World War, the American Council on Education makes a strong appeal for adult education. This action rests upon the premise that a democratic society cannot depend solely upon educational programs which are directed toward the fulfillment of the needs of growing children and youth. Adults, too, must be provided opportunities to learn if the society is to be improved.

Faith in the willingness of adults to continue learning may be gained

from reading this report of the ingenious ways in which millions of American soldiers engaged in the struggle to discover new ideas with an intensity of effort equal to that exercised on the field of battle. Actually, as is pointed out, our fighting men did not prosecute the war with a gun in one hand and a book in the other—military necessity dictated otherwise—but it can be said that many men practically picked up a book or joined a discussion group every time they laid aside their weapons.

Of particular interest to those engaged actively in adult-education work, as well as to teachers and administrators in both public schools and colleges, will be the descriptions of various patterns of recruiting and enrolling students in off-duty study activities, the techniques of evaluating educational potentialities of students, the methods employed in both individual and group instruction, guidance activities, the approaches to literary training, and the correspondence programs provided by the United States Armed Forces Institute. The usefulness of the book is increased significantly by the inclusion of extensive analyses of the implications of these wartime experiments for civilian adult-education programs.

LINDLEY J. STILES

STEFANSSON, VILHJALMUR, editor. *Great Adventures and Explorations.* New York: Dial Press, 1947. xii+788 pp.

This volume is a compilation of accounts of great discoveries written by participants, where possible, and from secondary and non-contemporary narratives where primary ones are nonexistent. They range from the early Phoenician and Greek voyages into the Atlantic and Chinese crossings of the Pacific down to the discoveries of the North and South Pole by Peary and Amundsen. Europe, Asia, and Africa are ruled out, which regrettably eliminated Marco Polo. Editorial comments explain the selections and attempt to solve historical problems, which are especially difficult in the cases of the earliest discoveries where sources are scanty and history becomes legend. The editor is inclined to give too much credence to early Atlantic voyages such as the Brendan legends of Ireland and early Norse discoveries. Even the Kensington rune stone of Minnesota, dated 1362, is given favorable consideration. He is on safer and happier ground in his comments on Arctic and Antarctic explorations, where he is an unquestioned authority.

Except for changes in spelling and punctuation, the narratives are given as they were written. Maps of hemispheric proportions are used for most of the discoveries, with some exceptions where the exploit was more limited geographically, as in the cases of Balboa and the crossings of North and South America. The accounts are well selected, and provide entertaining reading for everyone interested in discovery and exploration.

EUGENE H. ROSEBOOM

STRANG, RUTH. *Reporting to Parents.* New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1947. x+105 pp. (Practical Suggestions for Teaching, No. 10).

Reports to parents should be used as a co-operative means of bringing about progress toward the attainment of educational aims understood and accepted by the school, the home, and the child. The nature of these reports,

therefore, will vary with the educational outcomes desired. Percentages, letter marks, check lists, written comments, letters home, conferences, and various combinations of these, will be the media selected, depending on the educational purposes to be achieved. Reports on progress in subject-matter fields in relation to estimated ability must be accompanied by judgments of growth toward the realization of certain personal qualities. As Miss Strang says, "Parents need to know why a child is not making the expected progress and what they can do to help the teacher provide the experiences the child needs" (page 2).

This book should be extremely valuable in aiding schools in improving their methods of communicating with the home. In addition to listing the advantages and disadvantages of the various types of reports, the author has indicated the implications of their use for the philosophy, curriculum, and guidance procedures of the school.

JOHN J. KINSELLA

ENGLISH, O. SPURGEON (M.D.), AND PEARSON, GERALD H. J. *Emotional Problems of Living.* New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1945. 438 pp.

On a basis of psychoanalytic methods, the authors follow the development of personality patterns from infancy, through childhood and adolescence, to maturity. There is a discussion of the emotional disturbances which can arise during each stage of development and in response to adult problems. Symptoms of maladjustment and personality problems are traced to attitudes originating in the oral and anal periods.

In the latter section of the book, problems of later life, work, and marriage are discussed. Problems of neuroses and deviant sexual behavior are dealt with in this section.

Suggestions for therapy are given for each period as the problems of that period are introduced. There is also a final chapter on psychiatric techniques.

The book has been planned for lay readers as well as for an introductory textbook for medical students, teachers, and social workers. The language is non-technical, and the book contains many practical suggestions for parents.

JULIAN B. ROTTER

WATSON, GOODWIN. *Youth after Conflict.* New York: Association Press, 1947. xv+300 pp.

In this volume the character and conduct of youth are studied from the time of the Civil War to the present, with predictions for the future. The youth of America are the major concern, although a considerable amount of evidence is adduced in relation to European youth after the First World War.

The relatively limited amount of evidence brought forth concerning youth after the Civil War supports the author's position that "youth" had not at that time emerged as a group for consideration as such. Any effects which the war had upon youth were largely sublimated by the opening of new lands and the industrial expansion of the later decades of the nineteenth century.

European youth following the First World War seemed to reflect disillusionment; there was rejection of authority, flouting of moral codes, and

questioning of religion. There was considerable evidence to indicate a corresponding outlook on the part of American youth, although there were skeptics who were able to interpret the conduct of the youth of this period as being actually of a more idealistic nature, the expression itself being more direct and sincere.

The thesis is then developed that a study of long-term social trends provides a more adequate explanation for the behavior of youth than a war. Such evidence of social outlook as the titles (as suggestive of content) of books, motion pictures, and magazine articles is introduced. The effects of technology and improved transportation and communication are reviewed. Education and the arts are examined as components of an evolving social structure.

The author advances sixty-nine serious predictions, based on the judgment of solicited replies from leaders in many public and professional fields, on contacts with young persons, and on the author's own judgment. Some of these predictions are stimulating, others almost trite.

One misses a consideration of youth in the three decades prior to the First World War. Thorough support of the thesis would indicate that such evidence should be included.

JOHN S. RICHARDSON

WYNNE, JOHN P. *Philosophies of Education: from the Standpoint of the Philosophy of Experimentalism.* New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1947. xiv+428 pp.

From the standpoint of the author, all important philosophies of education are based upon three theories. One emphasizes order and appeals to authority to maintain it. A second emphasizes individual freedom and self-development. But each of these can be carried to extremes. Hence there must be a third position which attempts to avoid the weaknesses of the others; and it must do more than merely take a middle path. In recent decades there had been a tendency to swing toward the second theory, but during the war years the necessity for rapid training led to a tendency back to the first. The third position opposes both trends. It aims to formulate a philosophy which, when applied, will do more effectively what progressive education was striving to do. Indeed, it would do also what the conservative position seeks fundamentally. This is the direction the author sees in the work of Dewey, Kilpatrick, and Bode; and which is here designated experimentalism.

The reader must bear in mind that the course of education is determined neither by environment alone nor by individual development alone. The functional interplay of the two is decisive, and living is always tentative and experimental. A reconstruction is constantly going on; and it is important that it be directed toward desirable experiences. It is posited that the best society is democracy, and its aim is to increase the variety of interests and extent of freedom of interplay within and among groups.

The author finds six fundamental features of educative experience: relativity, sociality, motivation, creativity, selectivity, and unity. Each of these is discussed from the point of view of the three basic philosophies of education. There results an apparently Hegelian formulation of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis, though the similarity is apparent only.

Proceeding from theory to practice, there are found to be ten topics with respect to which those responsible for school activities need to be ready to take a stand: educational aims, subject-matter, organization, curriculum, general method, school training, research, technique, improvement programs, and educational leadership. The treatment of these topics is derived from observation of actual practices rather than deductively from the theories already set forth. Each is treated, however, from the standpoint of the three philosophies presented.

Much of the presentation seems an elaboration of the obvious. The result is a summary of the current points of view in educational discussion and an allocation of outstanding leaders to their relative positions in the field.

The crux of the matter centers finally in the concept of "desirable" experiences. Perhaps another volume will be necessary to do justice to this concept.

ALBERT E. AVEY

DUBOIS, W.E.B., AND JOHNSON, GUY B. *Encyclopedia of the Negro: Preparatory Volume with Reference Lists and Report.* New York: Phelps-Stokes Fund, Inc., 1945. 207 pp.

The authors indicate the timeliness of this preliminary report in as much as it is a guide to the general reader and to the specialized student interested in the field of exploring the history and contribution of a large minority group.

The announced purpose of the Encyclopedia, of which this first volume is a forerunner, is to collect, evaluate, and synthesize all the material pertinent to the Negro from the beginning of time to the present. It states that the Encyclopedia is to be devoted mainly to the American Negroes but will include related topics concerning the Negro in Africa and elsewhere. The entire project is to consist of four volumes of five hundred thousand words each. The preliminary report shows the expense budget of the entire project. It discusses the attitude of learned societies toward the significance of the proposed Encyclopedia. Also, it gives the articles of incorporation.

This preliminary report is, indeed, a contribution to the study of the Negro, but it has certain limitations. In the first place, the preliminary report is definitely not an encyclopedia. True, it does give an important bibliography bearing on the Negro. This bibliography is by no means complete, and it patently neglects to make use of many vital sources of information. If the bibliography is to serve as a basis for the proposed Encyclopedia, then, very definitely, it should expand its resource material. Also, there should be a revision of its contributors in order to bring new stimulation into the entire proposed project. It is rather discouraging to note that although it was incorporated in 1932, this preparatory volume represents its only publication. So far as is known to the writer, the work is at a standstill. This raises the issue as to whether the whole question of an encyclopedia for the Negro should not be reopened and re-evaluated with the purpose of establishing for it a broader and more representative base.

J. ARNET MITCHELL

## Predicting Listener Understanding and Interest in Newcasts

[*Continued from page 153*]

Secretary of State Marshall reveals that the United States has received a new message from Russia—a message that's much friendlier than other notes we've been getting from Moscow of late.

For the Russians agree that Japan's mandated islands in the Pacific —the Caroline, Marshall, and Marianas groups—should be placed under American trusteeship. In fact, the Russians pointed out that America should have control over the islands, as it was American forces who won them from the Japs.

Can most newscasts be written as simply as this story? And if they can be, will the result be greater understanding and interest? No doubt the subject-matter will still show differences in understanding and interest. We can only speculate on the problem now.

In the meantime we can significantly increase the listener's understanding and interest by attempting to write the news as simply as possible. A readability formula can be a helpful check on whether a radio news writer is succeeding.

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## The Birth Rate and Teacher Demand

[*Continued from page 156*]

teaching profession, the undertrained teachers now employed, and the current overcrowding of classes, it seems reasonable to assume that the schools of Ohio will demand a minimum of three thousand new elementary-school teachers annually for the next five or possibly ten years. With 851 new teachers available since June 1947, one can readily see that the shortage of elementary-school teachers of recent years is very likely to become increasingly acute in the years ahead.

At the secondary-school level, enrollments will not show any significant increase for the next six years. This, together with the fact that we are rapidly building up a potential surplus of secondary-school teachers, should give us no cause for alarm concerning a shortage of secondary-school teachers in the near future.

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